Give me your tired, your poor? Support for Social Citizenship Rights in the United States and Europe.

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D R A F T V E R S I O N

Abstract

The seminal work of T.H. Marshall (1950) is based on the assumption that democracy in the 20th century was expanded mainly because citizens also received social rights, granting them a universal right to decent living conditions. This expansion of the welfare state has been more limited in the United States than in other highly industrialized societies, and the attempts of President Obama to expand health care provisions have demonstrated that it does not seem likely that the US will follow the example of some European countries in this regard. In this paper we explore the hypothesis that this form of 'American exceptionalism' is related to the fact that US citizens are less inclined to consider social rights as an integral part of well-functioning democracy than their European counterparts. We do so by comparing the results of the European Social Survey (ESS, 2012) with those of a special module of the CCES (2014). The latent class analysis suggests that on both sides of the Atlantic, we find a similar distinction between political and social rights as democratic ideals. American exceptionalism, however, is reflected in the fact that US respondents are much less likely to consider fighting poverty and reducing income inequality as important democratic ideals. Especially among citizens that emphasize political rights, there is hardly any support for these social rights. In comparison with other OECD Member States, it can be observed that social rights are less strongly developed in the United States. The congruence between policy and public opinion, renders it less likely that this option would be abandoned in the near future.

Keywords: political citizenship; social citizenship; European Social Survey; latent class analysis; T.H. Marshall; CCES

Introduction

Across societies, there are sharp differences with regard to the extent of social welfare provisions. Various typologies have been suggested to introduce a distinction between, e.g., liberal, corporatist-static and social-democratic welfare states (Esping-Andersen, 1990). These types do not just differ on the scope of welfare coverage, but also with regard to the institutions and organizations that are charged to administer various welfare state provisions. In this literature, the United States stand out among other highly industrialized countries as a prime example of a liberal welfare state. Figures from the OECD show that public social expenditure in the United States amounts to 19.2 percent of GDP, which is remarkably lower than Germany (25.8 %), Japan (23.1 %), or the United Kingdom (21.7 %). With regard to the level of public social expenditure, the United States clearly is in the lower half of the OECD rankings (OECD, 2014). The political turmoil on the Affordable Care Act also suggests that expanding social protection programs apparently is a difficult endeavor in contemporary US politics. The question is how we can explain this reluctance of the US political system to develop a far more comprehensive social security system as exists e.g. in other major OECD economies like Germany or France.

In this paper, we investigate one possible explanation for this form of American exceptionalism: support among public opinion. Previous research has shown that there are very important differences in the support for redistribution among the public of various countries (Jæger, 2009). Opinions differ, however, on the causal logic used to explain these differences. On the one hand, it could be assumed that government policy responds to preferences within public opinion. If public opinion does not pay all that much attention to redistribution, the political system does not receive democratic incentives to develop such a scheme. However, it has also been argued that public opinion reacts to the functioning of the system: once, in specific historical circumstances, a specific system has been implemented, public opinion will take this system for granted, and will adapt its norms and expectations according to real life experience. In any case, both assumptions lead to the expectation that there will be a positive correlation between government policy and public opinion preferences, no matter what the direction of causality could be. In order to investigate the structure of public opinion beliefs, we rely on the influential theoretical framework that was developed by T.H. Marshall (1950). The expansion of the welfare state, according to his seminal theory, is not just a matter of policy measures, but it reflects an important phase in the expansion of democratic rights. While in the past democratic systems implemented civil and

political rights, during the 20th century, democracy increasingly came to be defined as an expansion of *social rights*, i.e., the rights of all citizens to enjoy decent living conditions, and the establishment of a social security system that is aimed to guarantee these living conditions. A lower degree of support for social rights as part of a comprehensive democratic ideal, thus might be one of the reasons why the United States has developed a rather restrictive social security system (Garfinkel, Rainwater & Smeeding, 2010). This hypothesis will be tested, using recent public opinion data on democratic ideals, that allow for a direct test of the T.H. Marshall approach. The data also allow for a comparison between the US and European societies, so that it can be investigated whether there is a degree of American exceptionalism on support for social rights. The use of the same questions on both sides of the Atlantic allows us to assess to what extent European and Americans differ on the importance they attach to the granting of social rights.

In this paper, we first offer a short review of the literature, before presenting data and methods. Following the results section, we close with some observation on what these findings might imply for the future development of social policy in the United States.

Social rights as citizenship

During the 20th century, the scope of government intervention in social and economic life has vastly expanded, mostly by the expansion of various forms of social security institutions. Within the normative literature, it is assumed that this transformation does not just amount to an incremental transformation of the state structure, and a gradual expansion of the scope of government intervention, but can be seen as a structural change in the way contemporary democracy is conceptualized. Marshall's theory of citizenship has had a huge impact on normative political science, and this is predominantly due to his bold move to set social rights and social justice at the heart of conceptualizing democracy and citizenship. Regimes of social protection, according to Marshall, amount to "a general enrichment of the concrete substance of civilized life, a general reduction of risk and insecurity, an equalization between the more and the less fortunate at all levels" (Marshall, 1964, 102). While this fundamental insight has strongly influenced the normative debate on social policy, the distinction between political and social citizenship is not all that often used in empirical political science (Bulmer & Rees, 1996). Therefore, we do not know whether this theoretical concept actually resonates within public opinion, and, if so, whether it could offer an explanation for how citizens envision issues of redistribution and social security.

Marshall distinguished three different conceptions of citizenship in the historical development of modern democracy. Civil citizenship corresponds to the entitlement to basic rights, like freedom of speech, thought and faith and the right to own property. While some of these rights date back to the Magna Carta, Marshall himself considered their proliferation and generalization mainly as an 18th century phenomenon. Political citizenship implies the right to vote for office-holders, or to be a candidate oneself for elected positions of power. Social citizenship, finally, was defined as the right "to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society. The institutions most closely connect with it are the educational system and the social services" (Marshall 1964, 72). What was new in Marshall's approach was not necessarily his sketch of this historical development, but rather the fact that he considered these three conceptions of citizenship as elements of the same process of broadening citizenship concepts. From Marshall's perspective, once citizens are recognized as full members of society, they also receive undeniable social rights, such as protection against poverty. In other words, social rights have become an integral element of the status of citizenship in the 20th century (Marshall 1964, 96). Although there is a tendency to give more priority to one sets of values compared to another—both in the literature as within policy practices—it is clear that in Marshall's view, there is no trade-off relation between political and social rights, as both of these rights must be ensured simultaneously (Revi, 2014). In this view, a fully democratic regime cannot exist without upholding both social rights as well as formal political rights (Lister, 2005). Within normative theory there seems to be a consensus that there cannot be a trade-off between these various sets of norms and values, and therefore the duty of a democratic political system is to ensure all three forms of citizenship. Social rights, therefore, receive the same status as the right to vote or the rule of law. As such, the writings of Marshall helped to legitimize the historically unprecedented expansion of the social function of the state, most notably in the United Kingdom, but also in other Western countries.

Marshall's theory of citizenship has been very influential, and it helped to shape 20th century systems of social security and redistribution. Comprehensive welfare state arrangements became considered to be a means to ensure the use of full citizenship rights, including for those with lower levels of economic resources (Korpi, 1989). Marshall's framework of rights bolstered the notion that social coverage must be universal, including all members of society. The distinction introduced by Marshall became a strong mobilizing concept that reframed social policy as integral to the realization of citizens' basic rights and no longer as an

ideological preference (Connell, 2012). Welfare state expansion came to be defined as a cornerstone of a truly democratic society.

While the theory of T.H. Marshall has been influential in numerous European countries, in the United States the impact of his work has remained more limited (Mead, 1997). His focus on the importance of social rights has also been considered as a normative option for a strong expansion of welfare state provisions and some public opinion research suggests that among the US population support for this expansion is but lukewarm (Quadagno & Pederson, 2012). In the US context, a protection against poverty, and assuring adequate living condition is much less frequently seen as a form of citizenship, that should be guaranteed by state institutions. The more limited scope of welfare provisions in the US, thus would imply that US citizens are indeed less likely to consider the provision of the social goods as a central responsibility for the political system.

If there is a convergence between public opinion and state policy, this can be explained in two distinct ways. The 'regime hypothesis' assumes that public opinion to a large extent adapts itself to the government policy that is being pursued (Jæger, 2006). Very generous welfare state arrangements will lead to a feeling of entitlement among the population, with as a result that these protective measures to a large extent will be taken for granted. A historical approach on the other hand, assumes that public policy reacts to preferences from within public opinion. Lipset and Marks (2010) have documented in great detail why the ideology of socialism never became a major political force in US politics. Lipset and Marks refer to a number of strategic mistakes, made by both party as trade union officials in the 19th and early 20th century, but they also highlight the fact that the US founding ethos of individualism and individual responsibility seems at odds with the collective protection and insurance logic that is inherent to the modern welfare state. Following the logic of Lipset and Marks would lead to the assumption that for US citizens, the provision of welfare rights simply receives less priority than it does for their European counterparts in highly industrialized democracies. The American ethos with an emphasis on individual freedom would have a negative effect on the public acceptance of collective insurance and redistribution schemes.

In this paper, our goal is not to try to disentangle any causal relationship between public opinion and policy, as we only have access to cross-sectional data. Our goal, however, is to ascertain whether the US position with regard to social security rights is indeed related to different conceptions on equality and social protection among US citizens. In order to test this

relation, we compare the findings from the European Social Survey in Europe (2012) with recent data from the Cooperative Congressional Election Study that was conducted in the US in Autumn 2014. Both surveys included an identical list with regard to ideal conceptions of democracy, thus allowing for a valid comparison between US and European public opinion. If social rights would be considered as less important in the US than in Europe, this would hint at a congruence between public opinion and public policy.

Data and Methods: Investigating Democratic ideals

The European Social Survey in 2012 is one of the first major comparative surveys in which respondents were asked about their expectations on the ideal of democracy. In this questionnaire battery, respondents were presented with a variety of aspects of democracy, and were asked to indicate the importance of each item ("how important do you think it is for democracy in general that…"). The items included in this battery cover diverse aspects of democratic functioning ranging from free and fair elections, the protection of minority rights to protecting citizens against poverty. The importance of the scale for our current paper is that it thus also includes social rights, as they were envisioned in the work of T.H. Marshall and there are hardly any other survey studies that try to operationalize this concept of social rights.

In the United States, the same module was included as part of the Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES 2014), that was conducted just before the Congressional elections of November 2014. The sample for this module was exactly 1,000 respondents. Given our focus on a comparison between the US and its European counterparts, in this paper we will mostly apply a comparison between the US sample, and that of the 29 European countries that took part in the European Social Survey. As both the US as the European data can be considered as largely representative of the population, such a comparison is empirically warranted.

Table 1. Mean scores on 'democratic ideals' battery

Description	Abbreviation	Eur. mean	US Mean	US order
1. The courts treat everyone the same	courts fair	9.22	8.71	1
2. National elections are free and fair	fair elec.	8.96	8.55	2
3. The government explains its decisions to voters	govt expl.	8.85	8.27	3
4. The media provide citizens with reliable information to judge the govt.	media info.	8.75	8.24	4
5. The government protects all citizens against poverty	poverty	8.68	6.80	**10**
6. Governing parties are punished in elections when they have done a bad job	party acc.	8.39	7.74	5
7. The rights of minority groups are protected	minority	8.34	7.40	**9**
8. Opposition parties are free to criticise the government	opposition	8.31	7.58	7
9. The media are free to criticise the government	free media	8.26	7.62	**6**
10. The government takes measures to reduce differences in income levels	income eq.	8.24	6.26	11
11. Different political parties offer clear alternatives to one another	party alter.	7.99	7.55	**8**

Notes: European Social Survey (n=48,805); CCES for the U.S. (n=1,000). Prefatory survey question: "Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general that…". Responses coded on a 0 to 10 scale where 0 indicates "not at all important" and 10 indicates "extremely important". Indicators are listed in descending order of means in Europe; right-hand column lists the rank ordering for the U.S. data.

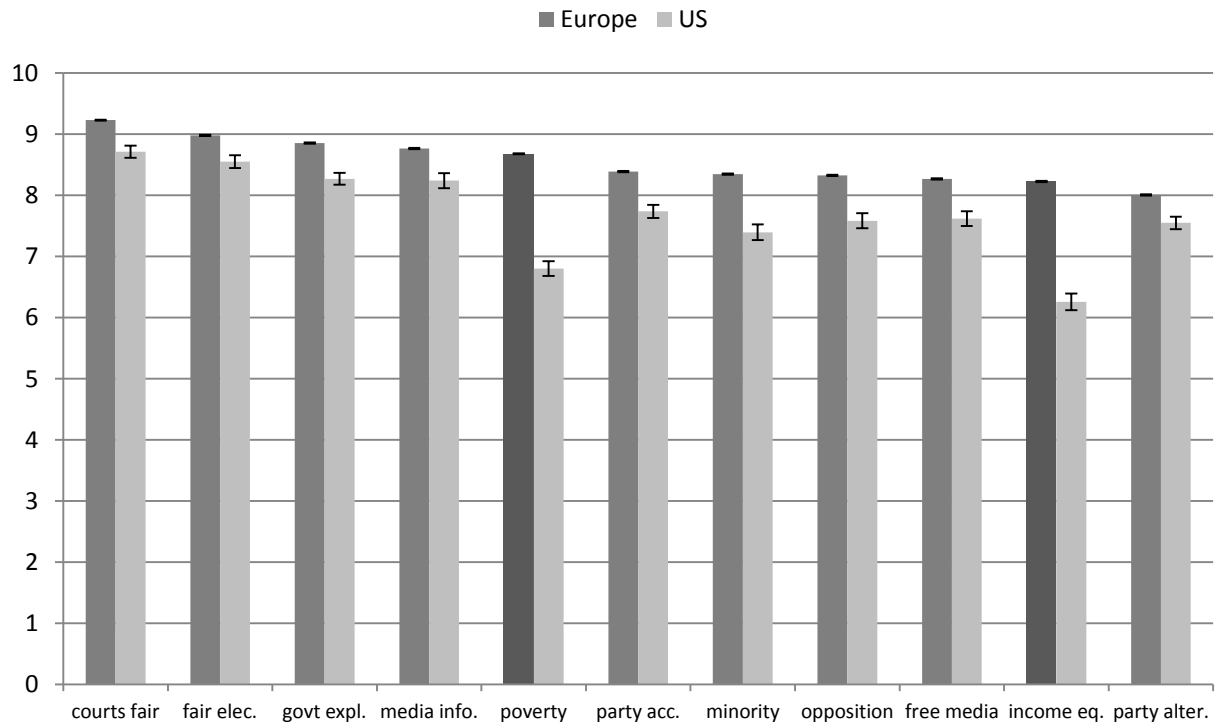
When we review the mean values of the items in this battery, a first striking finding is that respondents tend to consider *all* elements as very important (Table 1). With just two exceptions (see below) each and every item receives a score of 7 or higher, indicating that indeed citizens tend to have quite high expectations on democratic ideals. The rule of law (expressed by the item: "The courts treat everyone the same"), however, is clearly considered as the most important hallmark of a democratic political system with a score in Europe of 9.22 on the 0 to 10 scale and 8.71 in the United States. In both surveys the rule of law clearly is seen as the most important characteristic of a democracy. From a normative perspective, it is quite striking to note that the very first requirement citizens hold for a good democracy, refers to the legal system and the courts, and not to the political system as such. Free and fair elections obtain an almost equally high score (8.96 in Europe and 8.55 in the US). Also for the 3rd and the 4th most highly ranked items, we can observe a perfect symmetry between Europe and the US. Public opinion on both sides of the Atlantic, therefore, seem to converge quite strongly on what are the most important characteristics of democracy, and traditional liberal elements like the rule of law, free and fair elections and free media clearly are of paramount importance for most citizens.

From then on, however, we see very strong differences. In Europe, protecting citizens against poverty is still considered as an important characteristic of a democratic system. This is clearly not the same in the US, where this item only receives the 10th ranking, with an average

score of 6.80. US public opinion, on the other hand, seems to be more sensitive to traditional liberal rights, like the capability of the media and opposition parties to criticize the government. While reducing income inequality clearly is not a priority for European respondents either, we do observe that that this item almost completely disappears from the radar screen for US respondents, with an average score of 6.26. This simple overview of average already suggests that the two 'social' items clearly are ranked very low by US respondents, which is not the case for European respondents. Among all the items in the survey, the US score on the social rights items is the lowest that can be observed.

We can also visualize these differences, showing that especially for reducing poverty and fighting income inequality there is a large gap between European and US scores.

Figure 1. Scores on 'democratic ideals' battery – Europe compared to the US



Source: ESS for 29 European countries (n=48,805). CCES for the U.S. (n=1,000). Sample weights applied; whisker plots represent 95% confidence intervals.

In other words: social rights, on average, are not considered by European citizens to be beyond the realm of democratic politics, while we find less support for this claim among US respondents. European citizens consider various kinds of social rights to be highly important for democracy itself, while this might not, or to a lesser extent, be the case for US citizens. The question remains, however, as to whether citizens view the social dimension of

citizenship as distinct from formal political rights that are inherent to democracy? Here too, we can compare US and European public opinion.

Latent Class Analysis

In order to identify whether citizens hold distinctive democratic ideals in terms of the elements of democracy they consider most important, we performed a latent class analysis (LCA) that allows us to identify groups of respondents that are characterized by a similar combination of items in this battery. The main advantage of LCA for answering our research question is that it allows for the identification of latent structures that are not based on the separate items, but rather on how the individuals responding in the survey combine those items in distinctive patterns. Therefore it allows us to identify distinct groups of respondents who emphasize different combinations of items as priorities with regard to what is important for a democracy. Latent class analysis allows us to identity groups of citizens that hold on to specific concepts of democracy, by combining different items in this battery (Magidson & Vermunt, 2004). High scores on specific items are just as distinctive for the construction of these groups as low scores on other items. In other words, LCA allows us to identify groups of people who have distinctly different conceptions of what an ideal democracy looks like. In contrast to more traditional cluster analysis, LCA allows the researcher to determine the optimal number of clusters to be distinguished based on objective goodness of fit criteria while in cluster analysis this is usually the result of a more arbitrary decision. In this case, an actor-centered technique like LCA is also preferable over an item-based technique like factor analysis or principal component analysis, as we are mainly interested in how (groups of) individuals make specific combinations of various survey items.

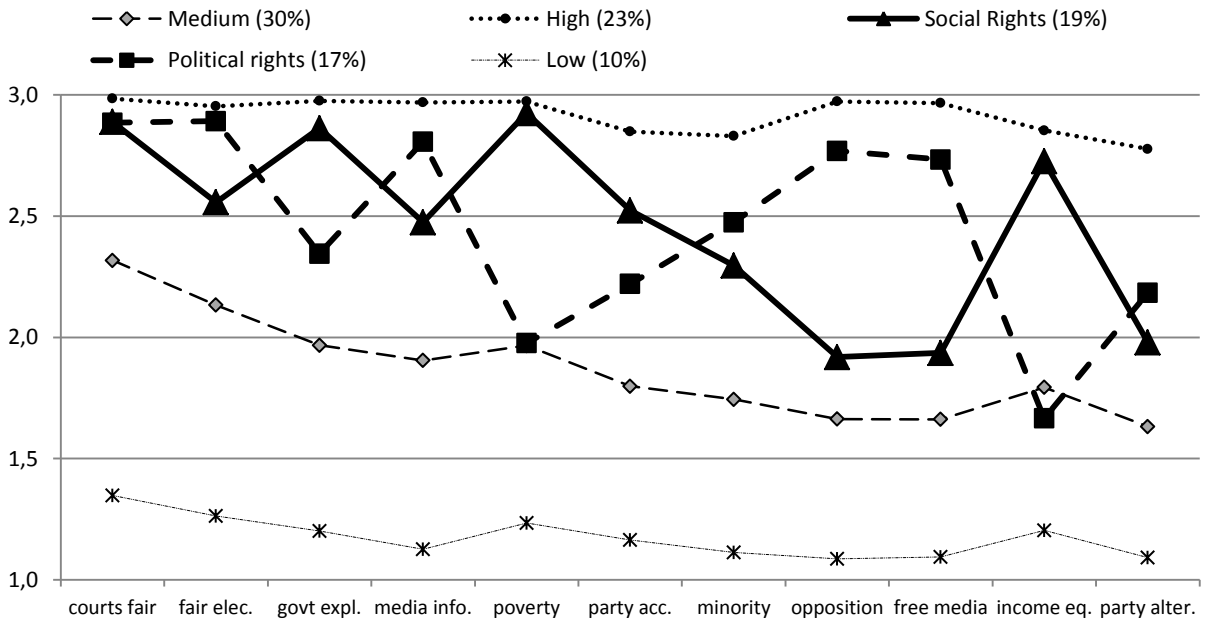
The eleven items, included in the 'democratic ideals' battery can be used in Latent Class Analysis. The goodness of fit criteria strongly suggest that the ideal solution is to distinguish five distinct groups to understand the structure of these preferences (see Appendix for documentation of model selection). Since LCA is an actor-centered analytical approach, it allows us to identify respondents who emphasize specific items among the 11-indicator battery in terms of what they consider to be most important for democracy.

The findings of this analysis suggest that five different groups of respondents should be distinguished. First of all, it has to be acknowledged that three of these groups are not all that informative from a theoretical point of view. The latent class labeled "high ideals", which includes 23% of the respondents, identifies a group of citizens who deemed all of the elements of democracy included in the survey to be highly important, without further distinction. This group of respondents gives the maximum score to almost all of the items, so we hardly can detect any variation. Conversely, the group labeled "low ideals", which includes 10% of the respondents, attributed relatively low importance to all of the democracy indicators, again without any meaningful variation. An additional group labelled "medium ideals" (30% of the population) consistently attributed moderate importance to all indicators and there is no apparent hierarchy in their answers. These three groups of the population, therefore, do not contribute all that much to addressing our research question. These findings show that almost two-thirds of the respondents (63%) do not attribute special importance to specific elements of democracy, but rather consider all (or none) to be important. While theoretically, all kinds of distinctions have been introduced, it should be acknowledged that a large group of citizens apparently does not pay all that much attention to these distinctions.

The two additional latent classes, however, are theoretically much more relevant, as they identify individuals who have two contrasting normative conceptions of what is important for democracy. The democratic ideal labeled as "social ideals" that is held by 19% of the respondents places relatively high importance on democratic values of economic equality (the reduction of income inequality and protection from poverty) and governmental accountability (government explaining its decisions and held accountable in elections). It can be seen that there is indeed a group of respondents that is highly motivated to emphasis social citizenship rights. In contrast, the ideal labeled "political ideals" that is held by 17% of the respondents place its relative emphasis on the importance of a free and competitive electoral process, free media, and the protection of minority rights, and these respond to the classical political rights. Both these groups have clearly distinct, and even contrasting democratic ideals, and this can also be visualized in Figure 1. In this Figure, the five distinct groups are depicted, and for every group we show the likelihood that they will consider this specific item to be highly important for democracy. Since in Figure 1 the democracy indicators are ordered on the x-axis from highest to lowest means in the general population, the contrasting emphases of these democratic ideals is visually clear in the criss-crossing of the connective lines. The

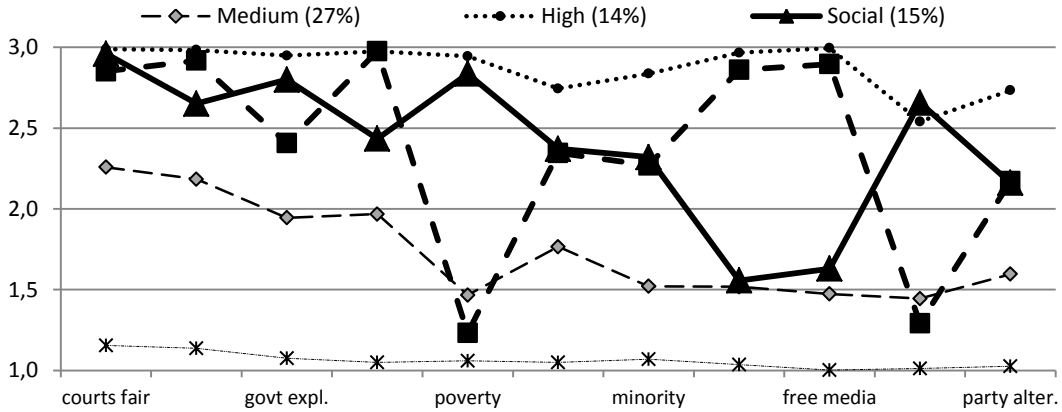
'social ideals' group is very likely to pay much attention to reducing poverty, while this is less of a priority for the 'political rights' group.

Figure 1. Democratic ideals held by five latent groups of citizens



Source: European Social Survey, 2012 (n=54,673) merged with CCES 2014 (n= 1,000).
Notes: Latent class analysis conditional probabilities for optimal partial equivalence model that includes country covariate and applies design weight for all cases[i]. The y-axis plots the conditional probabilities that members of a latent class will consider the indicators on the x-axis to be important aspects of democracy. Indicators on the x-axis are organized from left to right by decreasing means in the pooled dataset. Findings based on 3-point coding of the original 11-category democratic ideal items: 0-7 recoded as 1; 8-9 recoded as 2; 10 recoded as 3.[ii] See the appendix for further documentation of model choice and measurement equivalence tests.

Figure 2. Democratic ideals – U.S. only



Source: CCES 2014.

As was already noticed, the five group solution is also equivalent for the US, and thus can be found also among the US respondents in the CCES. If we plot, however, only the US

respondents and we compare their results with the overall results for the entire sample, we see that differences are much sharper (Figure 2). While the contrast between the group adhering to political rights and the group adhering to social rights is large across, the sample, it is even much sharper in the US itself. The group that support political rights has a remarkably low level of support for fighting poverty and reducing income inequality, and these items hardly receive any support from this group. Those holding on to political rights do not just seem to ignore the social items, they even score much lower on these than could be expected.

The analysis thus far has allowed us to identify five distinct groups of respondents, adhering to different democratic ideals. The distribution also suggest that these ideals are not just an expression of a political ideology, but that they express a different vision on democracy. We have data on 30 countries, and from a comparative perspective it is important to determine how valid our findings are across these societies. First of all, with regard to measurement validity, tests were run to ascertain the cross-cultural measurement validity of the five constructs (Appendix). Theses test show that the five group solution is indeed present across these societies, and therefore can be seen as a valid operationalization. Basically this implies that scores between countries can be compared in a valid manner. If we make this comparison, it can be observed that we find rather marked differences between the countries for which we have survey data (Table 4). First, it can be observed that the group that is focused on social rights is rather low in the US, with just 14.3 percent of respondents. This low score, however, is by no means exceptional, as the Netherlands or Iceland more or less have the same percentage. On the other hand, the group that emphasizes political rights is double the size in the US, with 29.5 percent of all respondents, and here only Denmark has a higher proportion of respondents stressing political rights. It is also quite telling to note that in the US the group of respondents that scores high on all indicators, remains rather limited and this is related to the fact that for almost every item, average scores in the US were lower than the average across Europe.

Table 4. Democratic ideals, distribution of citizens across countries into five ideals

	Social	Political	High	Medium	Low	n
Albania	0.315	0.077	0.451	0.145	0.012	
Belgium	0.186	0.157	0.129	0.394	0.134	
Bulgaria	0.202	0.184	0.395	0.182	0.038	
Switzerland	0.193	0.221	0.126	0.393	0.067	
Cyprus	0.191	0.140	0.390	0.258	0.022	
Czech Republic	0.188	0.179	0.177	0.289	0.167	
Germany	0.204	0.281	0.166	0.299	0.050	
Denmark	0.168	0.315	0.163	0.328	0.026	
Estonia	0.173	0.150	0.273	0.294	0.110	
Spain	0.280	0.077	0.320	0.257	0.066	
Finland	0.194	0.173	0.118	0.414	0.102	
France	0.199	0.144	0.180	0.383	0.095	
United Kingdom	0.200	0.129	0.192	0.349	0.130	
Hungary	0.158	0.117	0.378	0.217	0.130	
Ireland	0.149	0.120	0.212	0.349	0.170	
Israel	0.212	0.166	0.218	0.343	0.061	
Iceland	0.151	0.287	0.235	0.284	0.043	
Italy	0.286	0.118	0.255	0.296	0.045	
Lithuania	0.170	0.113	0.218	0.309	0.190	
Netherlands	0.132	0.188	0.101	0.434	0.145	
Norway	0.173	0.274	0.173	0.343	0.038	
Poland	0.261	0.171	0.272	0.257	0.039	
Portugal	0.172	0.046	0.306	0.257	0.219	
Russian Federation	0.211	0.131	0.262	0.244	0.153	
Sweden	0.138	0.323	0.235	0.268	0.037	
Slovenia	0.323	0.115	0.214	0.295	0.053	
Slovakia	0.156	0.118	0.161	0.362	0.203	
Ukraine	0.225	0.117	0.311	0.273	0.074	
Kosovo	0.222	0.063	0.373	0.237	0.105	
United States	0.143	0.295	0.120	0.264	0.178	
TOTAL						

Source: ESS 2012 and CCES 2014.
Notes: Entries are latent class analysis findings for distribution of population in each country among the five latent classes. Note that each row totals 1.0.

Discussion

In 1883, the German chancellor von Bismarck established the first comprehensive system of sickness insurance for workers and this system has been credited by providing basic stability for German society. When president Obama tried to follow that example some 130 years later, he met with fierce resistance, mostly in Congress but to some extent also in public opinion. This leads to the question that Lipset and Marks already posed: why didn't it happen here? Why didn't the United States develop a system of universal health care coverage, as in most other developed OECD countries? In this paper, we tried to find an answer to that question, using public opinion data. Are US citizens more reluctant to consider social rights as part of a fully mature democratic system. To answer this question, we compared data from the European social survey with data from the CCES survey in the US.

A first, important consideration is that the structure of citizenship rights, is equivalent across societies. The United States clearly is not an exception in this regard, as US respondent still see fighting poverty and reducing inequality as a potentially important part of the democratic ideal. American exceptionalism is not that strong that the social rights ideal that is so central in the work of T.H. Marshall would be completely absent among US respondents. If we consider the United States as a 'hard case', we therefore have to arrive at the conclusion that the distinction between civil, political and social rights does remain meaningful and can be found in public opinion data for a wide array of liberal democracies, both in Europe as in the United States.

What does make the United States exceptional, compared with industrialized states in Europe, however, is the fact that support for social rights is so limited. Even on a purely descriptive basis, one could already observe that general support for fighting income inequality is very low in the United States. It is important to note here that the explanation for the low level of support for reducing income inequality has to be different in the United States than it is in other countries, where this receives a rather low ranking. In the case of countries like Sweden (Gini coefficient .273), Belgium (.264) or Norway (.250) one might still consider that the relatively low support for a further reduction of income inequality amounts to a ceiling effect as these countries already have a rather egalitarian income structure. As Marshall (1964, 117) already noted: "We are not aiming at absolute equality. There are limits inherent in the egalitarian movement." But among the 24 traditional OECD member states, the United States

in fact has the highest level of income inequality with a Gini coefficient of .389, followed by Israel with .377. This is an exceptionally high figure, and one might think that this serves as an incentive to place more emphasis on fighting income inequality. The data show, however, that exactly the opposite occurs, and that support for social rights remains rather limited among US public opinion.

This low score can be explained in two ways: on the one group, the latent class that emphasizes social rights is rather small in the US context, much smaller than in comparable countries in Europe. The group that 'specializes' in social rights, and sees these as crucial within a democracy, obviously remains rather small. But just as important is the fact that among the group that emphasizes political rights, the scores for the 'social' items are extremely low, much lower in other countries. For this traditional liberal group, therefore, social rights seem to play no role whatsoever in talking about a mature and well-functioning democracy.

We have to acknowledge that the current paper offers just a first step in the explanation of why the United States is such a distinct society when it comes to social security and income redistribution. What we can observe is that these policies to a large extent seem to be congruent with preferences within public opinion, that emphasize liberal and political rights and seem to downplay social rights. It is obvious that in the United States we do not find strong support for social rights, like in some other countries that have high levels of inequality like Italy or Albania. The current analysis, on the other hand, does not allow us to make any claim on how we could explain this congruence. The regime hypothesis would argue that US citizens simply have learned not to expect strong government action in this regard, as this has never happened in recent decades. Why this is the case, could be a matter of historical investigations, on president power, the absence of a socialist party, or the weakness of trade unions (Lipset & Marks, 2000). Other authors would argue that the US political system simply receives less pressure from public opinion to extend social rights, as this kind of question would run against the US ethics on individual freedom and opportunity. No matter what the exact causal mechanism is that might be at play, the strong congruence between policy and public opinion preference, would allow us to predict that politicians that want to expand the scope of the state system in this regard, must likely will face a very steep uphill battle.

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Appendix

A1. Latent class model choice

Table A1 displays the goodness of fit statistics for selecting the optimal number of latent classes, and for testing for measurement equivalence across countries. The BIC is the most widely used statistic for assessing goodness of fit, and a smaller BIC indicates better model fit. A complementary approach is to evaluate the percent change in the likelihood chi-squared statistic L^2 in comparison to the one-class model (Magidson & Vermunt 2004: 176-177). Even though the absolute value of the BIC continues to decrease through the 6-class model, the percent reduction of the L^2 is minimal in the 6-class model. Adding a sixth class essentially splits the "low-expectations" class into two groups, one that has somewhat higher expectations than the other. Based on these considerations, we selected the five-class model.

Table A1. Latent class analysis model fit statistics for democratic ideals

Selecting optimal number of latent classes	BIC(LL)	CAIC(LL)	L^2	Change L^2	Class.Err.
1-Class	1194720	1194742	414310		0.00
2-Class	1020489	1020523	239949	-0.42	0.04
3-Class	973207	973253	192535	-0.54	0.06
4-Class	955536	955594	174733	-0.58	0.08
5-Class	936685	936755	155751	-0.62	0.10
6-Class	929586	929668	148521	-0.64	0.12

Notes: European Social Survey, 2012 (n=54,673)+CCES. BIC = Bayesian Information Criterion; LL = log likelihood; L^2=likelihood ratio chi-square statistics. Entries are test statistics for latent class models identifying one and more clusters of respondents, based on 11 indicators of democratic ideals with 'country' as a covariate, missings imputed, and design weights applied. Optimal model highlighted in bold font.

A2. Latent class measurement equivalence tests

In order to determine the viability of the latent classes as variables in subsequent cross-national analyses, it is necessary to test for whether the latent classes identified in the optimal model are

equivalent across the countries in the data (Kankaraš, Moors & Vermunt, 2010; Kankaraš & Vermunt, 2014). Table A1 includes the fit statistics of tests for two kinds of measurement equivalence:

(1) **Partial equivalence** means that the same latent construct (in this study, the five democratic ideals identified by the latent class groups) is valid across all of the groups under investigation (in this study, the 29 countries included in the study). The test of partial equivalence investigates whether there is equality of the slope parameters, and can be understood as parallel to the test for "metric equivalence" in factor analysis.

(2) **Homogeneous equivalence** means that the scales of the latent construct have the same origin, in addition to the same slope parameters (as indicated in partial equivalence). Homogeneous equivalence can be understood as parallel to the test for "scalar equivalence" in factor analysis.

The equivalence tests in Table A2 show that the partial equivalence model has the lowest BIC and is the optimal model. The subsequent models remove direct effects for single indicators to test whether full equivalence is found for specific indicators, testing first for indicators with the lowest bivariate residuals. The increased BIC in the models that selectively remove direct effects for single indicators shows that no indicators are fully homogeneous across countries, and therefore the partial equivalence model with direct effects (i.e. that allows the intercepts for each item to vary across countries) is the optimal model. Therefore, five-class partial equivalence model is comparable across countries, and can therefore be used as data for next-step cross-national analyses.

Table A2. Latent class analysis measurement equivalence tests

Measurement equivalence test, 5-class model	BIC(LL)	CAIC(LL)	L^2	Change L^2	Class.Err.
Homogeneous model	929450	929632	326900		0.10
Heterogeneous model	917778	919808	295067	-0.10	0.10
Partial equivalence, all direct effects	**913246**	**914044**	**303976**	**-0.07**	**0.11**
Partial equivalence, 1 direct effect removed (meprinf)	913905	914647	305245	-0.07	0.10
Partial equivalence, 1 direct effect removed (oppcrgv)	913885	914627	305225	-0.07	0.10

Notes: European Social Survey, 2012 (n=54,673)/CCES. BIC = Bayesian Information Criterion; LL = log likelihood; L^2=likelihood ratio chi-square statistics. Entries are test statistics for latent class measurement equivalence tests across countries for the 5-class model, based on 11 indicators of democratic ideals with 'country' as a covariate, missings imputed, and design weights applied. Optimal model highlighted in bold font.

Endnotes

[i] . The reported model includes all case in the data, including those with missing data on the battery of questions regarding democratic ideals. The proportion of missing data on these indicators is low, ranging from 2-4% on each of the democratic ideals indicators, and the proportion of missing values on these indicators are evenly distributed throughout the countries in the study. We conducted two alternate analyses to test whether the findings would be affected by restricting the analyses to cases with missing data on the democratic ideals battery: (a) Conducting a listwise deletion of all cases that are missing data on any of the 11 democracy indicators, thereby analyzing the remaining 89.27% of the research population (b) Retaining cases that have missing data on only one indicator in the democratic ideals battery, thereby analyzing 94.61% of the research population (and excluding the 5.34% of cases that have missing data on 2 or more democratic ideals items). Analyses based on these alternate codings of missing data yielded the same substantive findings as those reported in the article (available from the authors).

[ii] The advantage of recoding the original 11-category items into more parsimonious categories for the latent class analysis of these data is to avoid the problem of sparse data in analyzing categorical variables (Agresti 2007). As evident in the presentation of the indicator means in Table 1, the variables in this battery are highly skewed toward the high end of the 11-point scale, so use of the original 11-category items creates a computational problem of sparse data. Relatedly, the more parsimonious coding enables the computationally intensive task of performing a definitive test of measurement equivalence across countries. In addition to the 3-point recode findings reported in this article, we also performed robustness tests to investigate whether the findings were affected by using alternate codings, including: the original 11-cateory response items; dichotomous cutoffs at 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, as well as the mean or median of each variable; an alternate 3-point coding (0-8=1, 9=2, 10=3) and a 4-point coding (0-7=1, 8=2, 9=3, 10=4). These tests all yielded similar substantive results as those reported in the article.